United Nations CEDAW/C/SR.665

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
17 May 2005

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
Thirty-first session

Summary record of the 665th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 23 July 2004, at 4.30 p.m.

Chairperson: Ms. Açar

Contents

Adoption of the report of the Committee on its thirty-first session

Provisional agenda for the thirty-second session

Statement by the Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women

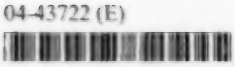
Closure of the session

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent *within one week of the date of this document* to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza.

Any corrections to the record of the meetings of this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.

04-43722 (E)



The meeting was called to order at 4.30 p.m.

Adoption of the report of the Committee on its thirty-first session (CEDAW/C/2004/II/L.1 and CEDAW/C/2004/CRP.3 and Add.1-8)

1. **Ms. Kwaku**, Rapporteur, introduced document CEDAW/C/2004/II/L.1, as amended, containing sections of the Committee's draft report on its thirty-first session, and documents CEDAW/C/2004/II/CRP.3 and Add.1-7, as amended, containing the Committee's concluding comments on the eight States parties whose reports it had considered during the session.

2. **The Chairperson** said she took it that the Committee wished to adopt the sections of the draft report contained in documents CEDAW/C/2004/II/L.1 and CEDAW/C/2004/II/CRP.3 and Add.1-7, as amended.

3. *It was so decided.*

4. **Ms. Kwaku**, Rapporteur, introduced the draft report of the Working Group of the Whole contained in document CEDAW/C/2004/II/CRP.3, Add.8, Parts I and II, as amended. The report contained details of the Committee's decisions, including draft decision 31/I requesting the General Assembly to extend the Committee's meeting time; activities carried out under the Optional Protocol; action taken by the Committee in implementation of article 21 of the Convention; and actions taken by the Committee on ways and means of expediting its work.

5. **The Chairperson** said she took it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft report of the Working Group of the Whole contained in document CEDAW/C/2004/II/Add.8, Parts I and II, as amended, which would constitute the Committee's report on agenda items 5, 6 and 7.

6. *It was so decided.*

7. **The Chairperson** said she took it that the Committee wished to adopt its draft report on the thirty-first session in its entirety and to entrust the Rapporteur with its finalization.

8. *It was so decided.*

Provisional agenda for the thirty-second session (CEDAW/C/2004/II/CRP.3/Add.8 (Part I))

9. **Ms. Kwaku**, Rapporteur, drew attention to the provisional agenda for the thirty-second session contained in chapter VIII of document CEDAW/C/2004/II/CRP.3/Add.8 (Part I).

10. *The provisional agenda for the thirty-second session was adopted.*

Statement by the Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women

11. **Ms. Hannan** (Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women and Officer-in-Charge of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women) said that the Division would support the Committee's decision to ask the General Assembly for an extension of meeting time by providing Member States with information about the Committee's working methods and trends in report submission and consideration and time allocation. In the autumn, the Division would be commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention, with the hope of bringing a new momentum to the drive for universal ratification and for better and more systematic implementation of the Convention in all States parties, and she wished to thank members of the Committee for their many good suggestions for activities to bring greater visibility to the Convention. The Division would continue to provide technical assistance to States parties in implementation of the Convention and fulfilment of reporting obligations and would report back to the Committee on the impact of such activities.

12. Preparations were in progress at the national, regional and global levels for the 10-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which would take place during the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The emphasis would be on interactive dialogue and the sharing of experiences and good practices. A questionnaire to Member States on national implementation would form the basis of the Secretary-General's report to the Commission. So far 102 responses had been received, in many of which the topics of women's human rights and violence against women had been prominently addressed. In addition, many States parties reporting to the Committee were including information in their reports on their

implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. The Division would be holding two expert group meetings prior to the Commission session on the role of national mechanisms for gender equality and on linking implementation of the Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals. On-line discussions would be organized on the critical areas of concern identified in the Platform for Action.

Closure of the session

13. **The Chairperson** recalled that during the past session the Committee had considered three initial State party reports that had long been pending, as well as four periodic reports. She would like to express particular appreciation to Argentina, which, at the request of the Committee, had presented a follow-up report to its fifth periodic report. Since the Committee's request had been unprecedented, the State party's willingness to respond was a welcome expression of support for the international human rights treaty system.

14. Several commonalities had emerged in the reports considered by the Committee. In Angola, Argentina, the Dominican Republic and Equatorial Guinea, particular socio-economic circumstances had had a strong adverse effect on the situation of women. The Committee had emphasized that, as those countries tackled economic crises or emerged from conflict, the States parties should make gender equality an explicit component of national development plans and cooperation programmes with international donors, in particular those aimed at poverty alleviation and sustainable development. De facto equality of women was not only an obligation of States parties to the Convention but a key means of making progress towards sustainable development. The Committee had also found, as in the past, that the persistence of prejudices, customary practices and stereotyped roles of women and men continued to be an obstacle to the achievement of gender equality. Although the forms that such stereotypes took varied from country to country, their disastrous consequences for women were much the same, the chief effects being limited access to decision-making positions, fewer opportunities for education and work and greater poverty. States parties had an obligation to act forcefully and creatively to eliminate such discrimination both de jure and de facto.

15. Among its other activities during the session, the Committee had commenced work on a new general recommendation on article 2 of the Convention. It had taken a decision to call on the Interim Government of Iraq to do its utmost to ensure that women participated equally in the reconstruction process, particularly the elections, and that the country's legal framework was in conformity with the Convention. The Committee had also made significant changes to its working methods as the fruit of three days of intensive discussions in Utrecht hosted by the Netherlands Institute of Human Rights with funding from the Government of the Netherlands; among other things, it had decided to request the General Assembly to authorize three annual sessions for the Committee. Through its Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol to the Convention, the Committee had taken action on its first communication. In another first, the Committee had completed its first inquiry under article 8 of the Optional Protocol. The thirty-first session had thus been an important and historic one.

16. In closing, she paid tribute to two experienced members of the Committee, Ms. Aida González Martínez and Ms. Yolanda Ferrer Gómez, who would be leaving the Committee at the end of the year of their own accord.

17. After an exchange of courtesies, she declared the thirty-first session closed.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.